

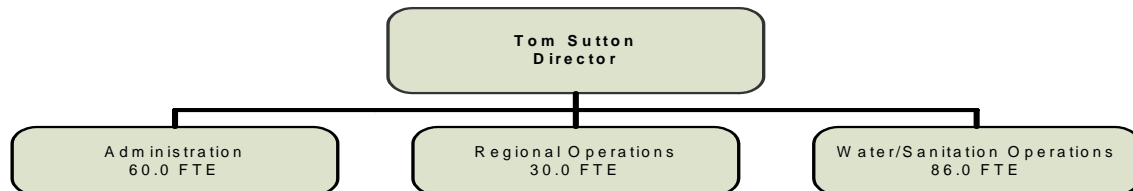
## SPECIAL DISTRICTS

### Thomas Sutton

#### I. MISSION STATEMENT

The Special Districts Department promotes safe, healthy, enjoyable and dynamic communities by providing essential programs and municipal services that meet the current needs of the communities served, in addition to that of planning for future growth and development.

#### II. ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



#### III. DESCRIPTION OF MAJOR SERVICES

The Special Districts Department provides direct administrative oversight to 96 dependent special districts (those governed by the Board of Supervisors). These districts provide a variety of municipal services throughout the County of San Bernardino, including water and sanitation, parks and recreation, road maintenance, television translator, and street light services. The administrative offices are located in San Bernardino and in Victorville. Satellite offices are located throughout the county in many of the communities served by the districts.

Districts and County Service Areas (CSA's) are legal entities authorized under California law and formed by the Board of Supervisors to provide municipal-type services, capital improvements and financial flexibility. The services and financial arrangements are tailored to meet the needs of a local area or region. These services are known as "extended services" because they are in addition to those services customarily provided by the general property tax. The desire and ability to pay for extended services are primary considerations in the communities' decision to form and operate a special district.

The Special Districts Department is organized in a support structure arrangement that allows for both the direct management of specific districts and the administrative oversight of other districts based on the size and complexity of the services and number of field operations staff. The department, through its six divisions, provides support and direction to each district. The divisions of the department include: Regional Operations, Water/Sanitation, Budget/Finance, Engineering/Construction, Human Resources, and Information Services.

**The Regional Operations Division** administers and monitors the day-to-day activities of over seventy-seven (77) districts countywide. The districts include all road, streetlight, open space, park, dam, cemetery, and television translator and refuse districts. The Operations Division has a staff of 6 in-house employees that work with the district employees, advisory commission, municipal advisory councils and volunteers to provide services to the individual districts.

In coordination with the Land Use Services Department, the division participates in the planning process with developers requesting to annex to special district utility systems. Staff oversees feasibility studies and cumulative impact studies for new developments. The division issues permits, and inspects all developer proposed water and sewer line extensions, new service connections, tract maps, and streetlight installations. The division provides services to other county departments or to the public. Staff coordinates with the Public Works Department on Special Districts Department road matters and acts as liaison on behalf of the water and sewer districts with lines in county roads.

**The Water/Sanitation Division** consists of eighteen (18) water and sewer county service area improvement zones and one (1) sanitation district that are collectively administered by the Special Districts Department under the Division of Water/Sanitation. The division is staffed with 105 positions including administration,



billing, collections, clerical, operations/maintenance, budget/finance, and project administration/engineering. The districts' service base ranges between 150 and 6,000 customers. The division's operation and maintenance functions are directed and performed on a regional basis. The main department office is located in San Bernardino, with regional offices located in Crestline and Victorville. There are 6 sub-regional operations/maintenance yards operated under the direction of the regional offices

**The Budget/Finance Division** coordinates and oversees the preparation, presentation and publishing of the districts' budgets. It provides budget analysis for department funds, including revenue and expenditure review and appropriation accounting. This division oversees contracts, purchasing and acquisitions, including preparation, audit, and processing of all transfer and payment documents, and maintenance of current and historical document files. The division also coordinates submittal of the department's county fees, and lien administration for special taxes, assessment districts and community facilities districts.

In conjunction with the Engineering/Construction, Water/Sanitation and the Regional Operations Divisions, the Budget/Finance Division is responsible for processing applications and implementation of state and federal grants for new facilities and infrastructure. In addition to grant proposals and contracting for the design and construction of the new facilities, staff will handle ongoing coordination with awarding agencies such as the Community Development and Housing Department, the Environmental Protection Agency, the United States Department of Agriculture, the Department of Housing and Urban Development the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the State Water and Resources Control Board and other lending agencies.

**The Engineering/Construction Division** is responsible for managing the capital improvement program for the Special Districts Department and County Fire Department facilities. These responsibilities include interdepartmental coordination, engineering and construction and inspection services.

The division performs short and long-range planning for the infrastructure systems managed by special districts, including 1,100 miles of roads, 9 water systems, 10 sewer systems, 67 fire stations, and 15 parks. These systems are continually evaluated to optimize efficiency, assure all maintenance is done, and implement the latest state and federal regulatory requirements. This planning process creates the special district's capital improvement plan (CIP). The Board of Supervisors approves the CIP annually in conjunction with the district operating budgets, and the division manages the design, bidding, and construction/inspection of these improvements.

The division conducts regular inspections and assists in the contracting of ongoing maintenance, repairs and other service contracts for special districts, fire, park facilities and fire stations throughout the county.

**The Human Resources Division** provides all recruitment, classification, EEO, and labor relation activities for the board-governed special districts and administers the personnel rules for the board-governed special districts and five Memoranda of Understanding, plus two compensation plans for non-represented special district employees. Human Resources also provides all payroll services for district employees.

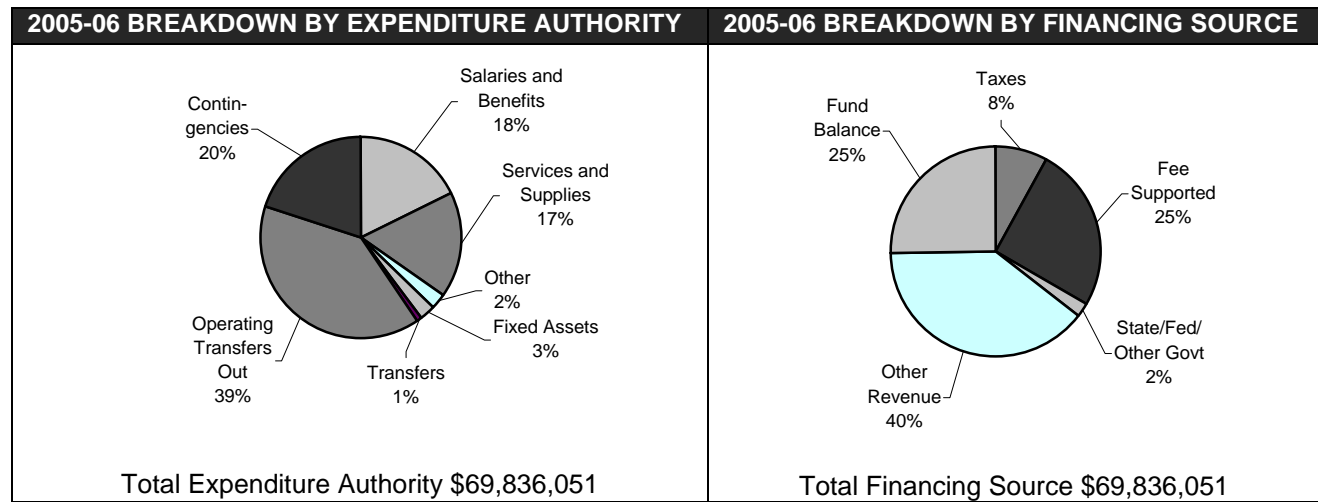
**The Information Services Division** provides full information and telecommunications services and support to all districts. This division develops specifications and requirements for all computer hardware and software purchases to ensure consistency and full integration with the county's computer systems. The division handles the coordination with contractors, vendors and county ISD to ensure new facilities are constructed or enhanced to support department computer and telecommunications systems.

The division also provides in-house support for all hardware, software, security systems, access control systems, telecommunications, and station-based radio systems, as well as developing and maintaining specialized applications for supporting unique functions within Special Districts. The division provides 24 hours/day and 7 days/week field support for all systems and incident support, as well as developing and maintaining specialized situation unit support trailers for major incidents. The trailers provide wireless capability, satellite television, and other communications abilities on site at the incident command posts during an incident response.

The Information Services Division maintains a staff of 15 personnel trained in network and communications infrastructure development and support, computer installation and support, database development and

support, application development, and network management. The division also develops and maintains cost effective network architecture to support the unique requirements of the Special Districts Department, while ensuring compatibility with other county departments and joint powers authorities.

#### IV. 2005-06 BUDGET



#### V. GOALS & 2006-07 OBJECTIVES AT CURRENT FUNDING LEVELS

GOALS	2006-07 OBJECTIVES
1. Increase customer service levels to district customers.	A. Decrease response time to utility service requests (water, sewer, roads, streetlighting). B. Enhance Internet website to enable water and sewer customers to pay utility bills on-line.
2. Increase staff proficiency to promote health and safety and program enhancements for all districts.	A. Increase the number of dual certified water/wastewater field staff. B. Provide for staff to receive annual training in their respective fields.

The department's goals and objectives were specifically selected to enhance its ability to achieve its mission. Providing essential programs and services requires that department staff remain cognizant of the ongoing responsibility to meet the community's needs for essential services. The stated goals specifically enhance the department's ability to provide excellent customer service and to promote health and safety and program enhancements to the district customer bases.

##### **GOAL NO. 1 - INCREASE CUSTOMER SERVICE LEVELS TO DISTRICT CUSTOMERS:**

Enhancing customer service is essential to the continued viability of the provision of services provided by districts to the unincorporated areas of the county. The objective of reducing the length of time between a call for service from a customer to completion of the service order will accomplish an enhanced customer service response. The new utility management system implemented in the prior fiscal year for the Water/Sanitation Division will provide for specific tracking of service order requests, services requested/provided, progress status and time lapsed between opening and completing service orders. This enhanced tracking system will provide the tool necessary to accurately measure response times. The internal tracking system for service requests to the Operations Division will be further refined allowing for measurement of the turn-around time for responses to road, park and streetlighting district customers.



Enhancing the department's internet website will maximize the department's resources to provide information and move toward providing internet services such as ACH, EFT and credit card payments for service to our customers. This objective will not only provide the department's 36,000 water and wastewater customers with various and convenient options for paying utility bills, but will also save the department payment processing time. The Water/Sanitation Division is currently manually transacting 2,500 electronic payments per month (30,000 per year). This internet service will decrease the need for manual input by 18%, for a projected 450 transactions per month (5,400 per year) as customers take advantage of the convenient payment options. All districts will benefit from an enhanced internet website by providing the customers of road and park and recreation districts with readily available up-to-date information regarding programs and services in their communities.

**GOAL NO. 2 - INCREASE STAFF PROFICIENCY TO PROMOTE HEALTH/SAFETY AND ENHANCEMENTS FOR ALL DISTRICTS:**

Increasing the number of staff with dual certifications in the Water/Sanitation Division is indicative of the department's responsibility and commitment to promote health and safety and provide the communities served with essential services in an efficient and cost effective manner. This objective, as it relates to the water and wastewater operations staff, increases staff proficiency and will allow for crossover between the water and wastewater operations of the districts. This then results in greater service delivery efficiency, and will enhance the departments ability to provide enhanced programs and services and comply with increasing regulatory requirements for existing services and provide other enhanced services such as tertiary treatment, wastewater reuse and advanced water treatment.

Continuous education and training objectives will ensure that staff is current on new technologies, information, and practices that will assist districts in meeting their current and future needs.

**VI. PERFORMANCE MEASURES AT CURRENT FUNDING LEVELS**

OBJT.	MEASUREMENT	2006-07 (Projected)
1A.	Percentage of service order/inquiry reports completed within seven working days after request for service (water, sewer, roads and streetlighting). (The current is 40%)	60%, (4,493 annual service orders completed within seven working days)
1B.	Percentage of customers using alternative payment methods such as ACH, EFT, and credit cards through the division's internet website to pay for utility services. (The current is 0%)	18%, (5,400 annual internet payments)
2A.	Increase dual certifications for water/wastewater field staff.	10% of all single certified water/wastewater staff.
2B.	Provide continuous training for district staff in their respective fields.	20% of all staff.

If there are questions about this business plan, please contact Thomas Sutton, Director, at (909) 387-5950.



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